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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/890,807	01/03/2002	Michael J. FAWCETT	H053310.0000US	6737

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EXAMINER

GILMAN, ALEXANDER

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2833

DATE MAILED: 07/03/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

AL

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/890,807

Applicant(s)

FAWCETT ET AL.

Examiner

Alexander Gilman

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 January 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 11 and 12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 11 and 12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-9, 11, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

Claim 1, lines 15-16; and claim 6, lines 1-2; each of the claims recites "means being provided for locking the contact holder to the contact of other contact element".

Disclosure and drawings do not provide any information regarding interlocking the contact holder and the contact of other contact element. According to specification, the locking means are disclosed for locking the contact holder to the body of other contact element.

For purposes of examination, the limitation was interpreted as locking the contact holder to the body of other contact element.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 6, line 4, recites "the connector element".

This term is unclear, since the respective independent claim 1 claims "first and second connector elements".

For purposes of examination, the limitation was interpreted as the connector element which the connector holder is mating to.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by BAc.

Bac (US 3,360,764) discloses a connector comprising (Fig. 1, 2):

first (A) and second (B) connector elements,

the first connector element (A) supports a first contact (13),

a displaceable (in a casing 3) contact holder (15, 21), carrying second (25) and third (26) contacts,

wherein

on interengagement the contact holder is displaced from first (Fig. 1) to second (Fig. 2) position after the third contact (26) is interconnected with a contact (36) of the other connector element (col. 6, lines 23-42);

on disengagement the first and second contacts separate before the third contact is separated (col. 6, lines 49-59);

the first contacts and second contacts, when separated, are located within a chamber (Fig. 1),

means for locking the contact holder to the other contact element (col. 7, lines 12-20).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

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invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2-4, 6-8, and 11, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bac.

With regard to claim 2, Bac discloses all of the limitations except for both connector elements having the contact holder for interconnection the first, second and third contacts.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide both connector elements having the contact holder for interconnection the first, second and third contacts, since it has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *St. Regis Paper Co. v. Bemis Co.*, 193 USPQ 8.

With regard to claims 3, 4, 11, and 12, Bac discloses the structural features which can be used to prevent the holder being blown out of the associated connector element – pin (19) on the contact holder and a slot (20) in the body of connector element.

To locate the pin and the slot in reversed order (as claimed) and provide the slot with the closed end (to prevent removing the holder from the connector element) would have been an obvious matter of design absent any criticality and since the function performed by the elements is the same.

With regard to claims 6-9, Bac discloses all of the limitations except for the locking means applied to the connector element (A) with the first, second, and third contacts.

Bac discloses (Fig. 3) the locking means applied to the connector element (B):

the connector balls (140) between the connector element (105) and the contact holder (128, 131) (claim 6);

means for locking including balls (140) and a spring-biased slider (155) (claims 7-9).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the connector element A with the locking means, since it has been held that rearranging parts of an invention involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Japikse*, 86 USPQ 70.

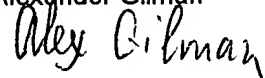
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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alexander Gilman whose telephone number is (703) 305-0847. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 10:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley can be reached on (703) 308-2319. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-7724 for regular communications and (703) 308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4900.

Alexander Gilman



June 25, 2002